

**SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY
ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE
SAN JOSÉ, CA 95192**

SS-F20-4, Sense of the Senate Resolution, On Continued Maximum Flexibility and Support of SJSU Students During the Prolonged COVID-19 Pandemic

Legislative history:

On December 7, 2020, the Academic Senate approved the following resolution presented by Senator Sullivan-Green on behalf of the Instruction and Student Affairs Committee.

**Sense of the Senate
On Continued Maximum Flexibility and Support of SJSU Students
During the Prolonged COVID-19 Pandemic**

Whereas: The COVID-19 pandemic continues its unprecedented disruption of university operations; and

Whereas: The SJSU campus and its community were also heavily impacted by unprecedented wildfire activity across the Bay Area in the first weeks of the Fall 2020 semester that resulted in evacuations for faculty, students, and staff, canceled classes, and campus closure; and

Whereas: The SJSU Academic Senate has repeatedly advocated for maximum flexibility and understanding on the part of faculty while working with students; and

Whereas: Student senators are advocating for student voices to be heard regarding decisions related to grading and student success during virtual learning; and

Whereas: Students continue to need accommodation for a variety of hardships including, but not limited to, stress, anxiety, depression, other mental health issues, unexpected disruptions in work schedules, financial difficulties, shifts in housing and study environments, an increase of family responsibilities, and the ability to access adequate or regular computer equipment or internet service; and

Whereas: Students should continue to be afforded the opportunity to request assistance in reducing the potential negative impact that the COVID-19

pandemic and other emergency incidents may have on their academic record; and

Whereas: An overly rapid change to the grading policy without adequate time to properly advise students regarding choosing Credit/No Credit could result in a negative outcome, especially in light of data from Spring 2020 that shows choosing Credit/No Credit had a negative impact for many students despite having time to consult with advisors and faculty and may create educational inequities in progress towards degree; therefore be it

Resolved: That the SJSU Academic Senate ask the university to continue to support students who experience great hardships that affect their academic performance by educating faculty and encouraging them to consider the

- assignment of an Incomplete (I) for students who were able to complete most but not all of the coursework
- assignment of an Unauthorized Withdrawal (WU) grade instead of assigning a failing grade (F) for students who are unable to complete most of the coursework; and therefore be it

Resolved: That the SJSU Academic Senate ask the university to reach out to and advise students who have been unsuccessful in their coursework, especially those who have received grades of Unauthorized Withdrawal (WU) due to these unprecedented circumstances, to consider formally requesting a Withdrawal (W) from some or all of their courses (and to make this request an easy, clearly communicated process to students); and therefore be it

Resolved: That the SJSU Academic Senate ask the university to review all Withdrawal (W) applications so that students are given fair consideration for circumstances which may be difficult to provide thorough documentation for, and to have the Director of the Academic Advising and Retention Services review all denials and appeals to ensure consistency in approving applications and in granting exceptions; and therefore be it

Resolved: That the SJSU Academic Senate ask the university to include a notation on all students' transcripts highlighting the potential impact of the pandemic on their grades for Fall 2020; and finally be it

Resolved: That the SJSU Academic Senate ask the university to continue to consider means of supporting students to address the underlying issues that lead to poor student success through outreach from CAPS or SJSU Cares, informing and training faculty on various resources available to support students, and outreach through Advancement to raise funds to support students' non-academic needs.

Approved: December 7, 2020
Vote: 14-0-0
Present: Chuang, French, Gomez Marcelino, Hill, Jackson (non-voting), Khan, Lee, Leisenring (non-voting), Rao, Sen, Sullivan-Green, Walker, Wilson, Wolcott, Yang, Yao
Absent: Delgadillo, Sorkhabi, Walters
Financial impact: Some resources may be needed to provide additional support for support staff, advisors and faculty.
Workload impact: There would be additional workload from support staff and advisors to serve students and train faculty.